

News from Ed Markey

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PLANS TO SELL DUAL-USE NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGIES TO INDIA BY US HASTY, REWARD BAD BEHAVIOR

Markey says any agreements must provide safeguards technology won't be used to make weapons

Washington, DC—Representative Edward J. Markey (D-MA), a senior member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee and Co-Chair of the Bipartisan Congressional Task Force on Non-Proliferation, today released a letter to Commerce Secretary Donald Evans questioning the possible sale of dual-use nuclear technologies to India, one of only four countries not to sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty.

“While India is our ally,” Markey said, “it has shown no interest in ending its nuclear and conventional arms race with Pakistan. Dual-use technology could allow India to miniaturize nuclear weapons for installation on missiles and to design nuclear submarines that could threaten any port in the world.”

The prospect of opening up sales of dual-use technologies to India was raised by Under Secretary of Commerce Kenneth I. Juster in a joint U.S.-India statement on November 13, 2002. While the joint statement indicated that no formal agreement has yet been reached, it indicated that such an agreement would be designed to encourage and increase “bilateral high technology trade, including trade in U.S. controlled dual-use items.” Dual-use technology has both peaceful and military applications. The United States and India will meet early in 2003 to continue discussions on this matter.

India has explored both civilian and military uses of nuclear material since 1948 and detonated its first nuclear device in 1974. In 1998, India exploded six nuclear weapons, which resulted in U.S.-led economic and political sanctions. These sanctions have since been eased such that now only four Indian entities require export licenses. Recent CIA reports indicate that India has continued to advance its weapons programs with assistance from Israel, Europe, and primarily, Russia.

Representative Markey asked the following questions of Secretary Evans:

- What technology is under consideration for sale to India?
- How was it decided that selling this technology to India would not be counter to our non-proliferation obligations?
- What safeguards would be in place to preclude the use of this technology in India's pursuit of nuclear weapons?

“Given our nation's interest in preventing the spread of nuclear weapons, I do not believe that the United States should allow a nation that has thumbed its nose at the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty to obtain access to dual-use technology,” stated Rep. Markey. “Why should we assist India in building better weapons that will further destabilize that region?”

This and all other correspondence may be found on Rep. Markey's website at www.house.gov/markey.

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